

Message Text

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73

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 CAB-09 DODE-00 FAA-00 PA-03

PRS-01 USIA-15 DOTE-00 SS-15 NSC-10 DRC-01 /104 W

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P 032359Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8285

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, MX

SUBJECT: STRIKE DEADLINE FOR FOREIGN AIRLINES OPERATING
TO MEXICO

REF: MEXICO 7453

1. MANAGERS OF UNIONIZED FOREIGN AIRLINES HELD ALL-NIGHT NEGOTIATING SESSION AT MINISTRY OF LABOR WITH A FEDERATION OF UNIONS REPRESENTING NON-FLYING PERSONNEL AND LABOR SECRETARIAT MEDIATORS IN EFFORT REACH WAGE AGREEMENT BEFORE OCT 3 STRIKE DEADLINE. NEGOTIATIONS WERE UNSUCCESSFUL AND STRIKES BEGAN AT 1:00 P.M. SECRETARY OF LABOR MUNOZ LEDO IMMEDIATELY SUMMONED MANAGERS TO HIS OFFICE AND OFFERED A 72-HOUR EXTENSION FOR CONTINUATION OF NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH WAS ACCEPTED. REPORTEDLY MUNOZ TOLD MANAGERS THAT THEY MUST MEET RECOMMENDED FORMULA (SEE REFTEL) AND THAT GOM THROUGH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS WOULD CONTACT AMBASSADORS OF COUNTRY AIRLINES INVOLVED AND ASK THEM TO USE INFLUENCE WITH THEIR AIRLINES TO AGREE. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD MEET AGAIN WITH THEM THIS EVENING, HOLDING OUT LITTLE HOPE HOWEVER THAT HE WOULD BE SYMPATHETIC TO SETTLEMENTS TAILORED TO SITUATIONS OF INDIVIDUAL AIRLINES. SO FAR FOREIGN AIRLINES REMAIN UNITED IN REFUSING GOVERNMENT FORMULA WITH EXCEPTION OF CUBAN

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AIRLINE CUBANA, WHICH SETTLED AFTER MUNOZ MEETING.

2. WORKERS RETURNED TO THEIR JOBS THIS AFTERNOON AND AIRLINE OPERATIONS, WITH MUCH DISRUPTION IN SCHEDULING, RETURNED TO NORMAL.

3. COMMENT: DESPITE MUNOZ LEDO'S REPORTED THREAT TO EXERT DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE, EMBASSY HAS NOT BEEN APPROACHED BY FOREIGN OFFICE CONCERNING THIS OR ANY OTHER LABOR DISPUTE. GIVEN HARD LINE BEING TAKEN BY UNIONS WITH FULL GOVERNMENT BACKING AND ADDITIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE THAT BOTH MEXICAN AIRLINES HAVE SETTLED ON GOVERNMENT UNION TERMS, POSITION FOREIGN AIRLINES EXTREMELY DIFFICULT. DEPENDING ON INDIVIDUAL CIRCUMSTANCE SOME MAY BE WILLING TO TAKE STRIKE AND OTHERS TRY TO ABSORB COST BY RESTRUCTURING SERVICES. ALTHOUGH AMERICAN, TEXAS INTERNATIONAL, AND HUGHES AIR WEST ARE NOT UNIONIZED AND THEREFORE ARE NOT AFFECTED BY STRIKE DEADLINE, THEY WILL FIND THEMSELVES UNDER PRESSURE TO FOLLOW SETTLEMENTS EVENTUALLY REACHED WITH UNIONIZED CARRIERS. SITUATION FURTHER COMPLICATED BY FACT THAT DATES FOR REGULAR CONTRACT RENEGOTIATIONS DIFFER BY AIRLINE AND UNIONS UNWILLING TO AGREE THAT COST-OF-LIVING RAISES GIVEN NOW WILL BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION AT TIME EXISTING CONTRACTS ARE RENEWED.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETINGS, AVIATION AGREEMENTS, LABOR STRIKES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973MEXICO07491
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: MEXICO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731054/aaaabnlh.tel
Line Count: 85
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: MEXICO 7453
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23-Jan-2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <13 FEB 2002 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: STRIKE DEADLINE FOR FOREIGN AIRLINES OPERATIING TO MEXICO
TAGS: ETRN, MX
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005